

**Families and Education Levy RFQ Information Sessions Q&A  
Expanded Learning Opportunities / College and Career Readiness  
January 25, 2012**

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**QUESTIONS ABOUT SUBMISSIONS (including Data Sample)**

**Q: Is there preference between quantitative and qualitative data?**

A: Yes. We prefer quantitative data.

**Q: Is there a maximum page limit on the data sample?**

A: No, but more isn't necessarily better. Again, we want to see how your agency uses data to inform your work and measure success.

**Q: If an agency participates in the RFQ process and becomes qualified, but the school they want to partner with does not get selected for funding, does the agency have to submit another RFQ the following year?**

A: Once an agency is qualified, the agency will be placed on the approved provider list and will remain on that list for the duration of the Levy as long as it continues to achieve the Outcomes it's contracted to. If an agency consistently underperforms, OFE will require the provider to go through the RFQ process again.

**Q: If an agency wants to provide both Elementary, Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Family Support AND Extended Learning Opportunities programs, does it need to submit two RFQs?**

A: Yes (even if the information provided is very similar.)

**Q: Will the evaluation of an agency's data include causality?**

A: No.

**Q: Should an agency submit their RFQ and RFPI at the same time?**

A: The RFQ and RFPI can be turned in separately or together. The deadline for both is February 14, 2012 by 4:30 p.m.

**Q: Is the budget form required and part of the RFQ?**

A: No. The budget form is part of the RFPI, which is optional.

**Q: Should an agency provide one contact for each category listed in Question 3 of the Previous Experience section of the RFQ?**

A: There is no set number of required references and the categories listed are meant as suggestions. An agency should list partners that can speak most clearly to the work the agency describes in the RFQ.

**Q: If an agency has a whole continuum of services it provides, can it describe the whole suite of offerings or should it describe the offerings in more of an “a la carte” manner?**

A: The agency may take either approach. Within the five-page limit, the agency should describe programs keeping the outcomes and indicators in mind. Schools will be looking for agencies that can best match the needs of their focus students.

**Q: Does an agency need a letter of commitment in the RFQ process?**

A: No. There is no FEL funding tied directly to the RFQ process.

**Q: If an agency does have a letter of commitment, is it prohibited from submitting it with its RFQ?**

A: No. However, the agency must adhere to the five-page limit and all other submission requirements. The agency should focus on the questions asked and on demonstrating the qualifications listed.

## **SCHOOLS/FUNDING/PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND AGENCIES**

**Q: Have the innovation schools been selected yet? Please explain that process.**

A: No, the innovation schools have not been selected yet. OFE is working with Seattle Public Schools to get data to set eligibility criteria for schools. Eligible schools interested in receiving FEL funding will go through a competitive RFI process that is being finalized now. We hope to release the RFIs at the end of February and allow schools 6-8 weeks to apply. Please note that part of this timeline is dependent on City Council's actions regarding the FEL Implementation Plan.

**Q: Which schools are eligible to submit an RFI?**

A: OFE is working with Seattle Public Schools to determine the list of eligible schools.

**Q: What are the eligibility criteria for a school to participate in the RFI process?**

A: We are still finalizing the details but we are generally looking for schools with large numbers of low-performing students and/or students with multiple risk factors.

**Q: What will the deadline be for schools to submit their RFIs?**

A: The deadline has not been set yet. Please note that part of this timeline is dependent on City Council's actions regarding the FEL Implementation Plan.

**Q: Can you provide more information on the Linkage Sites?**

A: Up to five middle schools will be selected as Innovation Schools. The funding range for an Innovation Middle School is \$300,000-\$450,000 per year. Other K-8s and middle schools will be able to apply for Linkage Site funds. Linkage Site funds can be used for many of the same programs and supports that Innovation Schools will be pursuing, but they will be funded at a much smaller amount.

**Q: Will schools need to demonstrate why they're choosing the qualified agencies they want to work with?**

A: Yes. Schools will need to justify their partners, based on the needs of their students and their desired results.

**Q: If an agency is already working with a school and it wants to be funded through FEL funds, should it encourage the school to turn in an RFI application and incorporate the agency and its work into the school's RFI?**

**A:** Yes and yes.

**Q: What is the relationship between this RFQ process and agencies already working with schools?**

**A:** The RFQ process is for any agency that wants to be eligible to receive FEL funds. It does not prevent, nor guarantee, any agencies from working with schools.

**Q: Will schools have to go through the RFI process every year?**

**A:** Yes. However, once a school is selected for funds, it will continue to receive Levy funds for the duration of the Levy as long as it continues to meet its outcome and indicator targets set by the contract and there are no other circumstances that reduce the number of at-risk students at the school. If a school loses its funding, other eligible schools will have an opportunity to compete for those funds.

**Q: Will the workshops sponsored by OFE and Seattle Public Schools be with schools already selected to receive funding or with all schools?**

**A:** The workshops will include schools eligible to receive FEL funding and are intended to bring eligible schools together with qualified agencies so that eligible schools can submit the strongest RFIs possible.

**Q: Is it possible for a school receiving Out-of-School Time funds through the previous Levy to lose funding in the new Levy?**

**A:** Yes. In the previous Levy, all middle schools and K-8s were automatically allocated Out-of-School Time funding. Under the new Levy, the funding will be awarded through a competitive process.

**Q: Will schools need to be qualified through one step and then put together a school plan with how they plan on allocating their funds in another step?**

**A:** No. In the RFI process, eligible schools will put forth a proposal including which partners they want to work with, why they want to work with those agencies, and how they want to allocate funds.

**Q: This process places a big burden on principals. Won't they be overwhelmed? What if a principal is not familiar with all the programs in his/her school?**

**A:** The hope is that this process will create a more collaborative process within the school. There is a conscious effort to encourage school leaders to own partnerships with outside agencies and incorporate those partnerships into their strategies for improving student achievement.

We also have heard from principals that they are inundated by requests from outside organizations to work with their school. This RFQ process is, in part, an effort to assist schools with a screening process for outside agencies that want to work with schools.

**Q: Can Levy money be used for future years for a particular program?**

A: Schools will have to participate in the RFI renewal process every year. Schools will not be able to commit funding for multiple years because there is no funding commitment of FEL funds for multiple years. Schools and agencies can of course create multi-year plans but there are no multi-year commitments of FEL funding.

**Q: Are schools re-competing every year for funds?**

A: Schools selected in the first year have the potential to renew their contract every year for the duration of the Levy. Levy funding is dependent on the schools achieving their outcomes and indicators. Schools that do not achieve the outcomes and indicators they commit to will be defunded or have funding amounts decreased. Other schools may then have the opportunity to compete for those funds.

**Q: Can a school identify an agency it wants to work with in its RFI even if the school has no prior relationship with the agency?**

A: Yes. One of the reasons we encourage agencies to complete an RFPI is to let schools know about programs and agencies they may not yet be aware of. Also, the regional meetings OFE will host with Seattle Public Schools are intended to facilitate conversations between qualified agencies and eligible schools.

**Q: Is there a limit to the number of agencies a school can work with?**

A: No. For FEL funding, the agencies must be qualified through the RFQ process but the number of agencies a school works with is up to the school.

**Q: When evaluating schools, will certain parts proposed in the RFI be funded and other parts not?**

A: Possibly.

**Q: Will there only be 5 eligible high schools and will they all receive funding? If not, will other non-eligible schools be allowed to compete for FEL funds?**

A: The list of eligible schools has not yet been determined. Up to five high schools can be funded but if there are not five strong applications, fewer schools will be funded. Non-eligible schools will not be allowed to apply for FEL funds.

**RFPI (including Budget Form)**

**Q: Is there an example of how to fill out the budget form?**

A: Yes, an example is provided in the RFPI.

**Q: Are agencies going to be held to the information provided in the Budget Form?**

A: The RFPI is optional and intended to provide schools with information on the programs/services an agency can provide and how much it might cost. We anticipate the RFPIs serving as a starting point for discussions between qualified agencies and eligible schools.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**Q: If an agency hasn't been using MAP data, can it access data and try to link it to its work and the Outcomes and Indicators?**

A: A qualified response will demonstrate an agency's experience tracking data points that can be linked to achieving Outcomes and Indicators for focus students (among the other qualifications listed in the RFQ).

**Q: If an agency is not yet collecting data but would be willing to do that, is there an opportunity for them to work with Seattle Public Schools to access that data in order to put forth a strong RFQ application next year?**

A: An agency would need to submit the appropriate data release consent forms to SPS for each of the students they serve.

**Q: If an agency is qualified through the RFQ process and partners with a school receiving FEL funds, is there an established process to access the student-level data for focus students?**

A: OFE is working with Seattle Public Schools to create a parental consent form to cover all Levy-funded projects for each student. If we are unable to create this "blanket" consent form, an agency will have to obtain individual parental consent forms for all the students served.

**Q: Does the Expanded Learning Opportunities RFQ include Summer Learning programs? Can any of the Expanded Learning Opportunities funding be used towards Summer Learning programs?**

A: Summer Learning funds can't be accessed until summer 2013 and, therefore, there will be a separate process this fall where agencies will be able to apply directly for FEL funds. Schools will be able to choose how they use their Innovation School funds, and may allocate some ELO funds to Summer Learning.

**Q: Can an agency apply both for the Expanded Learning RFQ and the Summer Learning RFI later?**

A: Yes.

**Q: Is the RFQ for Summer Learning still due Feb. 14?**

A: No, there will be no RFQ process for Summer Learning. The Summer Learning process will be an RFI process opens to both agencies and schools that will take place this fall.

**Q: Who are the outside reviewers who will be evaluating the RFQs? Have the outside reviewers already been identified? Are they evaluating the RFQs or are they evaluating a later stage in the process?**

A: We will be working with individuals who know this community and have experience objectively reviewing grant applications. We have reached out to organizations like the Seattle Foundation, the Raikes Foundation, and the Gates Foundation. Review panels will consist of OFE staff and these outside evaluators.

**Q: Are you considering Alliance for Education to provide an outside reviewer?**

A: We have not approached the Alliance for Education.

- Q: If an agency's role is one of convening partners, where does it fit into this process? Can FEL funds go towards coordination functions?**
- A: If an agency is planning on providing a service in a school or providing training, it must submit an RFQ. Schools will then choose which eligible agencies they want to partner with for particular services
- Q: Will agencies with a long history have an advantage over newer agencies?**
- A: We are more interested in Outcomes and Indicators achieved than in an agency's history. Regardless of an agency's length of existence, we will be looking for agencies that can demonstrate their ability to achieve student results as listed in the Outcomes and Indicators.
- Q: What if an agency is trying to develop a new program and does not have the data to submit?**
- A: FEL funding is intended to invest in programs and agencies with successful track records. If an agency is qualified through the RFQ process, it may propose new programs to schools. Schools will decide what programs and agencies are best to address the needs of their focus populations.
- Q: If an agency presents data from one program that has achieved good results aligned with the Outcomes and Indicators and becomes qualified through the RFQ process, may it then propose other more innovative programs?**
- A: Yes, if the agency is qualified, it may then try to partner with schools on new programs. If the programs don't achieve the results the school has committed to, however, the program and/or the school risk losing some or all of its funding.
- Q: Would it be helpful if an agency shared a data measure that it hasn't used yet but thinks might be useful?**
- A: We are most interested in data measures you are using now.
- Q: Is this the only RFQ process for the next 7 years?**
- A: No, there will be an RFQ process every year. If an agency does not get qualified or chooses not to apply this year, it can apply in following years.
- Q: How many agencies will be qualified through the RFQ process?**
- A: There is no minimum or maximum number of agencies that will be qualified through the RFQ process.
- Q: Can a program within Seattle Public School apply through the RFQ process?**
- A: No. OFE will contract directly with Seattle Public Schools for any programs under its purview.
- Q: Is there a comprehensive timeline listing deadlines by month?**
- A: There is a timeline listed on the OFE website [<http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/education>]. Some deadlines have not yet been set and are therefore not yet available.

- Q: The questions in the RFQ are not directly related to the practices listed in the College and Career Readiness section of the document. Does an agency need to address those practices in their answers?**
- A: Much of that information may be covered in the RFPI. In the RFQ, focus on answering the questions provided and the criteria listed under the questions.
- Q: Where does parental involvement fall into this College and Career Readiness RFQ process?**
- A: It could fall into a variety of places. The RFQ document discusses education and exposure for students and families.
- Q: Can focus students participate in activities that would involve non-focus students? Can a school use Levy funds to match up with a program that non-focus students participate in?**
- A: Yes, focus students can participate in activities that involve non-focus students. Any Levy funding, however, must go towards focus students.
- Q: If an agency has developed a program for focus students, is there anything to stop it from replicating that program for other students?**
- A: No. In fact, part of the intent behind the Levy is to identify successful programs and be able to share them.
- Q: Is there a “pot of money” for College and Career Readiness and another “pot of money” for Expanded Learning Opportunities, for example?**
- A: No, the money will be allocated as block grants to innovation schools.
- Q: What would make an agency unsuccessful in RFQ process?**
- A: An agency must meet all of the criteria listed in the RFQ in order to become qualified.
- Q: How can new partners be incorporated after the RFQ process is complete?**
- A: There will be an RFQ process every year for the duration of the Levy. If an agency does not get qualified or chooses not to apply this year, it can apply in following years.
- Q: Our agency has revamped our outcomes and data collection. Would you recommend that we apply this year or apply in future years once we have outcomes connected to our new process?**
- A: OFE does not have a recommendation. If an agency applies this year and is not qualified, that will not disadvantage the agency if it applies the following year.
- Q: Are you considering a process where stakeholders can come together and evaluate this process?**
- A: There is FEL funding set aside to evaluate outcomes for students but not one set aside specifically for evaluating the process. There is a Levy Oversight Committee, composed of city leaders and citizen representatives, whose role is to review and advise upon implementation plans, evaluation plans, and other aspects of FEL implementation.

**Q: If an agency is focused on a broad population and not honed in on these particular focus students, how should it proceed?**

A: The Levy money is for focus students. An agency that works with populations broader than the focus students would need to be able to demonstrate its success in achieving the Outcomes and Indicators with focus students.

**Q: In the RFQ process, will each individual agency be evaluated or will the composite of agencies that may be working with a particular school be evaluated?**

A: In the RFQ process, each individual agency is being evaluated to determine whether it meets the criteria listed.

**Q: Given that the focus of high school investments is on the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, will a cohort model be used going forward or will the focus be only on 9<sup>th</sup> graders each year?**

A: The major focus of the Levy in high school is on 9<sup>th</sup> graders with the outcome of 9<sup>th</sup> graders promoting on time to 10<sup>th</sup> grade. However, the College and Career Readiness component begins in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and will continue through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Q: If an agency does not have much experience in data tracking, can it refer to national studies or other programs that have solid data about the intervention that they want to replicate?**

A: Yes. However, the RFQ process is intended to qualify agencies with an established track record of achieving the outcomes outlined. FEL funding is not intended for capacity building.